

Debate Pack

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Iran's compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

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Background

A Westminster Hall debate on Iran's compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) has been scheduled for Tuesday 19 October 2021 from 2.30-4:00pm. The debate has been initiated by Stephen Crabb MP.

Iranian breaches of the JCPOA

On 14 July 2015, Iran and the P5+1 group—the US, UK, France, Germany, China and Russia—reached an agreement on a long-term deal regarding Iran's nuclear capabilities. The deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, committed Iran to reducing its stockpile of enriched uranium, limiting further enrichment activities, and verified monitoring and inspections, in exchange for sanctions relief. It did not include broader measures on Iranian foreign policy or its ballistic missile programme. The deal was endorsed by [UN Security Council Resolution 2231](#).

Iran's compliance with the JCPOA is monitored and verified by the [International Atomic Energy Agency \(IAEA\)](#).

Since May 2019 Iran has incrementally violated the terms of the agreement. It has lifted the cap on its stockpile of uranium, increased its enrichment activities beyond the 3.67 per cent permitted under the JCPOA and resumed activity at nuclear facilities that were previously prohibited from uranium enrichment under the terms of the deal.

The Iranian Government linked those violations to the failure of the deal to deliver sanctions relief and, by default, the Trump administration's decision to withdraw from the deal in 2018 and reimpose sanctions.

At the beginning of January 2020, the Iranian Government went one step further and announced that it would no longer abide by any of its commitments under the JCPOA. As a result, there would be no restrictions on Iran's uranium stockpile or enrichment programme going forward and its nuclear programme would "[be developed solely based on its technical needs](#)". The announcement fell short of a total withdrawal from the deal, however, as Iran confirmed that it would continue its co-operation with the IAEA and allow IAEA inspectors access to its sites. It also stated that it would return to its obligations under the JCPOA if sanctions were lifted.

On 14 January 2020 the E3 (UK, France and Germany) referred the matter to the Joint Commission of the JCPOA.

After almost a year of dispute resolution, in December 2020 the Iranian Parliament and Guardian Council [passed legislation](#) requiring the Government to speed up its resumption of nuclear activities if sanctions relief was not forthcoming by 21 February 2021. The law also provided for Iran to

suspend implementation of the Additional Protocol on safeguards and to reduce cooperation with the IAEA, which it did on 23 February 2021. In line with its nuclear laws Iran started enriching uranium to 20 per cent in early 2021 and more recently moved to 60 per cent enrichment, far beyond what is considered necessary for civilian purposes. Weapons grade uranium is enriched to 90 per cent. In August 2021 the IAEA verified that Iran had begun producing uranium metal which has little civilian purpose and is applicable to nuclear weapons development.

Under the terms of the JCPOA Iran's breakout time had been [estimated at one year](#). The time it could take Iran to produce enough fissile material for nuclear weapons is now [estimated at a few months](#). Estimates of breakout time do not account, however, for the technological capability and time required to build a deliverable nuclear warhead, whether there is the political will to proceed toward weaponisation and the impact of likely pre-emptive action by external actors.

Iran continues to maintain that its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes and that all activities initiated in the last two years are reversible if sanctions are lifted.

Status of talks

After President Biden indicated his willingness to re-join the JCPOA in early 2021, negotiators held six rounds of talks aimed at restoring the agreement. Progress was considered to have been made under the previous Iranian administration of Hassan Rouhani, despite [significant challenges remaining](#), specifically in relation to Iran's recent nuclear advancements, its missile programme and its [regional foreign policies](#).

However, a deal was not concluded before Rouhani left office in August 2021. While there was hope that negotiations could resume quickly under the new President, Ebrahim Raisi, Iran has not yet returned to the negotiating table and continues to escalate its nuclear activities, in violation of the deal.

While many view Iran's actions as an attempt to gain leverage in any future discussions, there are concerns that, on its current trajectory, Iran will soon acquire irreversible nuclear knowledge that renders the JCPOA meaningless.

Further reading

A more detailed analysis of the prospects for the JCPOA is available in Commons Library Briefing Paper: [Status of the Iran nuclear deal](#) (14 October 2021).

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Press and media articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

[U.S., EU, Israel adopt tough tone on Iran, mull options](#)

Reuters

Arshad Mohammed, John Irish and Parisa Hafezi

14 October 2021

[US and Israel exploring 'plan B' for if Iran does not resume nuclear talks](#)

The Guardian

Patrick Wintour

13 October 2021

[US calls for 'imminent' return to nuclear talks with Iran](#)

Al Jazeera

7 October 2021

[Preparing for Plan B with Iran](#)

RUSI Commentary

Kelsey Davenport

6 October 2021

[Alternatives to Failed Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran](#)

RUSI Newsbrief

Darya Dolzikova and Dr Tobias Borck

24 September 2021

[Iran says nuclear talks to resume 'very soon,' gives no date](#)

Reuters

Michelle Nichols and Arshad Mohammed

24 September 2021

[The E3's Post-JCPOA Role on Iran](#)

RUSI Commentary

Dr Tobias Borck

23 September 2021

[Biden signals that the US is prepared to rejoin the Iran nuclear deal](#)

The Independent
John Bowden
22 September 2021

[Iran nuclear deal: What's next for the JCPOA?](#)

Al Jazeera
Ali Harb
3 September 2021

[Iran and US still far apart on reviving the JCPOA](#)

International Institute for Strategic Studies
John Krzyzaniak
23 August 2021

[Iran's Nuclear Program: Tehran's Compliance with International Obligations](#)

Congressional Research Service
18 August 2021

[What's Next for Iran Nuclear Talks?](#)

Center for Strategic and International Studies
Eric Brewer
19 May 2021

[Iranian Compliance and the JCPOA Negotiations](#)

Council on Foreign Relations
Elliott Abrams
5 May 2021

[Iran nuclear deal: US joins Vienna talks aimed at reviving accord](#)

BBC News Online
9 April 2021

[Iran nuclear deal: US agrees to join talks brokered by EU](#)

The Guardian
Julian Borger and Patrick Wintour
19 February 2021

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Press releases

[Iran: Foreign Secretary meets Iranian Foreign Minister](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

22 September 2021

A Foreign, Commonwealth and Development spokesperson said:

The Foreign Secretary held her first meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian to discuss bilateral, nuclear and regional issues. She called for the release and return home of British dual national detainees. She urged Iran to return rapidly to the JCPoA negotiations in Vienna with a view to all sides coming back into compliance and reducing tensions over Iran's nuclear programme.

[E3 Statement at the IAEA Board of Governors on verification and monitoring in Iran \(JCPoA\), September 2021](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

15 September 2021

Thank you Madame Chair,

France, Germany and the United Kingdom would like to thank DG Grossi for his latest report contained in GOV/2021/39 and DDG Aparo for the Technical Briefing. We commend the Agency for its timely, independent and objective reporting.

As E3 we remain fully supportive and are committed to the negotiation process undertaken by all JCPoA participants and the United States in Vienna, focussed on facilitating a return of the US to the deal, bringing Iran back into full compliance with its commitments and restoring the benefits of the JCPoA for all. We strongly encourage Iran to urgently seize this diplomatic opportunity.

At the same time, we are deeply concerned by Iran's continued violations of its nuclear-related commitments, and recent escalations. Since the last Board of Governors in June, Iran has continued to conduct unauthorised activities with uranium metal and has, for the first time, produced uranium metal enriched to 20%.

Iran has no plausible civilian reason for such activity, which provides weapons-applicable knowledge gain. Iran should halt the production of uranium metal immediately.

Iran has also started the process of doubling its production rate of High Enriched Uranium since the Board last convened. The production of HEU is unprecedented in a non-nuclear weapons state. This is profoundly concerning, as it represents a critical step for nuclear weapons production and provides irreversible nuclear weapons-related knowledge gains. We hope this Board can stand united in calling on Iran to immediately stop the production of HEU.

Iran has also continued to stockpile uranium enriched to 20%. Iran has made significant efforts to convert its stockpile of Low Enriched Uranium enriched up to 5% to 20%. This in addition to 60% production also significantly reduces the time it would take for Iran to obtain fissile material for a nuclear weapon.

Iran's continued development of powerful, advanced centrifuges is permanently improving the country's enrichment capabilities. Iran has installed and is operating advanced centrifuges on a mass scale. Iran continues to enhance its enrichment capacity by installing greater numbers of advanced centrifuges, including at the underground Fordow facility. We strongly urge Iran to cease these activities.

Collectively, these steps present a pressing nuclear proliferation risk, have irreversible consequences for Iran's nuclear capabilities, and undermine the non-proliferation benefits of the JCPoA. It is particularly regrettable that Iran has deepened its systematic violations of the JCPoA at a time when all JCPoA participants and the United States are engaged in substantive discussions, with the objective of finding a diplomatic solution to restore the JCPoA. We urge Iran to cease further escalation, and to constructively reengage in negotiations without further delay.

In this context, we are concerned by the continued limits placed on the IAEA's monitoring and surveillance activities in Iran. Iran needs to restore all accesses by resuming its provisional application of the Additional Protocol and reinstating all JCPoA-related transparency provisions in full, thereby allowing the IAEA unimpeded access to all sites and activities the Agency requires according to its reporting mandate. By limiting accesses whilst simultaneously escalating its nuclear programme, Iran is making it harder for the international community to be assured about the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. We know that our very serious concerns about Iran's actions are widely shared among members of this Board.

We appreciate the intense efforts of the IAEA Director General to engage with Iran. We welcome the joint statement between the Director General of the IAEA and the Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran issued on 12 September, which confirms the IAEA's inspectors will be permitted to service the identified equipment and replace their storage media which will be kept

under the joint IAEA and AEOI seals in Iran. It is important that Iran implements this agreement without delay.

We once again thank the IAEA for its accurate reporting, despite the limitations placed on its activities, and welcome the most rigorous and impartial implementation of the mandate conferred on it by the United Nations Security Council.

We encourage the DG to keep the Board informed regarding progress on monitoring and verification in Iran in all its aspects. It is important that the Board continues to monitor the situation closely. We would welcome the Agency's latest quarterly report on monitoring and verification in Iran being made public.

Thank you.

E3 Statement on the JCPoA

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

19 August 2021

The governments of France, Germany and the United Kingdom respond to Iranian plans to produce uranium metal.

We, the governments of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, note with grave concern the latest reports by the IAEA confirming that Iran has produced uranium metal enriched up to 20% for the first time, and has significantly increased its production capacity of uranium enriched up to 60%.

We reiterate that these are serious violations of Iran's commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA). Both are key steps in the development of a nuclear weapon and Iran has no credible civilian need for either measure. Our concerns are deepened by the fact that Iran has significantly limited IAEA access through withdrawing from JCPoA-agreed monitoring arrangements and ceasing application of the Additional Protocol.

Iran's activities are all the more troubling given the fact talks in Vienna have been interrupted upon Tehran's request for two months now and that Iran has not yet committed to a date for their resumption. While refusing to negotiate, Iran is instead establishing facts on the ground which make a return to the JCPOA more complicated.

Iran must halt all activities in violation of the JCPoA without delay. We urge Iran to return to the negotiations in Vienna as soon as possible with a view to bringing them to a swift, successful conclusion. We have repeatedly stressed that time is on no-one's side.

Committed to full implementation of the JCPoA
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
30 June 2021

Thank you, Mr President. I would like to start by welcoming the Secretary-General's eleventh report and to thank the Secretariat for their continued professionalism and support they provide to the Secretary General in enabling production of this report. We also thank the Facilitator and her team for their work on a balanced and accurate Facilitator's report.

We support the Secretary-General's findings and remain committed to full implementation of the JCPoA and Resolution 2231. This is why we are engaging in talks in Vienna aimed at finding a diplomatic solution to revitalise and restore the benefits of the JCPoA. Our priority is for the US to return to the deal, to bring Iran back into compliance with its commitments and to restore the benefits of the deal for all. The talks cannot be open ended and the time for reaching a decision is fast approaching. We cannot guarantee that the same terms for a deal will be on offer later in the year.

We remain deeply concerned at Iran's continued violations of its nuclear-related commitments, including the escalatory steps taken since January 2021. Collectively, these steps present a significant nuclear proliferation risk, have irreversible consequences for Iran's nuclear capabilities, and undermine the non-proliferation benefits of the JCPoA.

In this context, we are also concerned by the continued limits placed on the IAEA's monitoring and surveillance activities in Iran. Iran must co-operate fully with the IAEA and grant unimpeded access to all relevant sites and activities to ensure the Agency can continue to fulfil its reporting mandate under resolution 2231.

2021 has also seen a continuation of Iran's destabilising activity around the Middle East, including activities that are inconsistent with resolution 2231. Iran's Ballistic Missile technologies pose a threat to regional security, including as a potential delivery system for weapons of mass destruction.

We welcome the talks between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Dialogue is the cornerstone for the de-escalation of regional tensions. We note Iranian President-elect Raisi's comments on 18 June stating that his administration is open to continuing dialogue with Saudi Arabia. We urge all regional partners to engage constructively to improve the security and prosperity of the region.

We call upon President-elect Raisi to set Iran on a different course. He can do this by addressing concerns about Iran's nuclear programme, putting an end to Iran's destabilising activity and human rights abuses, and releasing British nationals detained in Iran.

Upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime, ensuring the authority and integrity of the Security Council and improving regional security should remain our shared objectives.

Thank you, Mr President.

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PQs

Iran: Nuclear Power

10 Sep 2021 | 40855

Asked by: Robert Halfon

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to prevent Iran's further non-compliance with the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action nuclear deal.

Answering member: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We have been engaged in intensive discussions in Vienna with other Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) participants and the US, which are aimed at returning the US to the JCPoA, bringing Iran back into full compliance with its commitments and restoring the benefits of the deal for all. We began those negotiations in Vienna on 6 April 2021. We negotiated in good faith for six rounds of talks over 10 weeks until Iran paused talks on 20 June. Iran urgently needs to return to negotiations. We stand ready to return to Vienna as soon as possible for a swift conclusion of the deal on the table.

Iran: Nuclear Power

10 Sep 2021 | 38472

Asked by: Robert Lorgan

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent progress he has made in ongoing talks on the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Answering member: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

On 19 August, the UK issued a joint statement with France and Germany underlining our grave concern at the latest reports of the IAEA. These reports confirm that Iran has produced uranium metal enriched up to 20% for the first time, and has significantly increased its production capacity of uranium enriched up to 60%.

60% enrichment constitutes an important step towards developing a nuclear weapon. No State without nuclear weapons has ever before produced Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU). We urge Iran to halt all activities in violation of the JCPoA and return to the negotiations in Vienna as soon as possible with a view to bringing them to a swift, successful conclusion.

Topical Questions

20 Jul 2021 | 699 c806

Asked by: Paul Holmes

This month marks six years since the joint comprehensive plan of action nuclear deal was signed, yet Iran has faced no consequences for its flagrant violations of the deal. Does my right hon. Friend share my concern that Iran has failed to live up to its nuclear commitments, and will he confirm that nothing is off the table, including the reimposition of sanctions?

Answered by: Dominic Raab | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My hon. Friend is absolutely right to point to the continued systemic non-compliance by Iran with its JCPOA commitments. Of course, Iran is still subject to wide-ranging sanctions. We strongly urge Iran to halt all its activities in violation of the JCPOA and, in line with the new US position, come back to the table and make sure that we can conclude a return to the JCPOA. I would just say that we do not believe that those negotiations can remain open-ended forever.

International Atomic Energy Agency

05 Jul 2021 | 24959

Asked by: Karen Bradley

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the International Atomic Energy Agency's ability to verify and monitor Iran's nuclear activities.

Answering member: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

On 23 February Iran suspended its application of the Additional Protocol and the transparency measures under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA). The Foreign Secretary, alongside his E3 partners, has made clear that Iran must reverse these restrictions and co-operate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The UK has also repeatedly stated that Iran must co-operate on all issues related to the IAEA's separate safeguards investigation. We are currently engaged in intensive discussions in Vienna with JCPoA participants and the US, aimed at returning Iran back into full compliance with its JCPoA commitments, and restoring the benefits of the deal for all.

Iran: Nuclear Power

02 Jul 2021 | 22026

Asked by: Greg Smith

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with international partners on pursuing a strengthened nuclear deal that addresses Iran's support for terrorism and ballistic missile programme.

Answering member: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

A restored and fully implemented Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) could provide the confidence to further address regional and security concerns. As such, we welcome and support President Biden's commitment to not just return to the deal, but to strengthen and extend it. A substantive effort is required to improve regional security and Iran's role in destabilising the region needs to be addressed.

We have been engaged in intensive discussions in Vienna with other JCPOA participants and the US, which are aimed at returning the US to the JCPOA, bringing Iran back into full compliance with its commitments and restoring the benefits of the deal for all.

Iran: Nuclear Power

29 Jun 2021 | 21899

Asked by: Lisa Nandy

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his international counterparts on the restoration of the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Answering member: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We have been engaged in intensive discussions in Vienna with other Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) participants and the US, which are aimed at returning the US to the JCPOA, bringing Iran back into full compliance with its commitments and restoring the benefits of the deal for all. Our priority remains to find a diplomatic way forward and bring an end to Iran's continues systematic non-compliance with its JCPOA commitments.

Middle East: Peace Negotiations

23 Jun 2021 | HL937

Asked by: Baroness Eaton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure issues affecting the wider middle east region, including the involvement of Iran in regional conflicts, are included in discussions on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

Answering member: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Our immediate priority is to bring an end to Iran's continued systematic non-compliance with its JCPoA nuclear commitments. To that end, we are currently engaged in talks in Vienna with other JCPoA participants and the US aimed at returning the US to the deal, bringing Iran back into full compliance with its commitments and restoring the benefits of the deal for all.

A restored and fully implemented JCPoA could provide the confidence to further address regional and security concerns. As such, we welcome and support President Biden's commitment to not just return to the deal, but to strengthen and extend it. A substantive effort is required to improve regional security and Iran's role in destabilising the region needs to be addressed.

Iran: Guided Weapons

16 Jun 2021 | 12109

Asked by: Jack Lopresti

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of Iran's ballistic missile programme.

Answering member: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Iran's ballistic missile programme is destabilising for the region and poses a threat to European security. UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which was unanimously adopted in the Security Council and underpins the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA), calls on Iran not to undertake activities related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering a nuclear weapon. These UN ballistic missile restrictions remain in place until 2023. Alongside France and Germany (as E3), we have written repeatedly to the UN Secretary-General, most recently on 18 February, to bring attention to Iranian missile activity inconsistent with UNSCR 2231. We urge Iran to fully abide by UNSCR 2231 and all other relevant resolutions.

[Iran](#)

15 Jun 2021 | 697 c108

Asked by: Greg Smith

The UN's nuclear watchdog has warned that Iran is now producing uranium at levels that "only countries making bombs" are reaching, after successfully enriching to 60% purity. Given that this knowledge cannot be unlearned, does my right hon. Friend share my concern that Iran's nuclear activities already extend far beyond the outdated JCPOA? What steps will he be taking to address not only Iran's nuclear belligerence but its support for terrorism and the ballistic missile programme?

Answered by: Dominic Raab | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My hon. Friend is absolutely right. It is not just the stockpile of enriched uranium, which is 16 times the permitted limit, but the operation of the centrifuges and the production of uranium metal that are of deep concern. All sides agree that Iran must return to full compliance, and there has been some progress in the talks in Vienna, but a successful outcome is far from guaranteed. Those talks cannot continue to be open-ended; we need to see a return to full compliance. My hon. Friend is also right to refer to the need for "longer and stronger", as it is dubbed, to ensure not just that we have permanent guarantees in relation to the nuclear issue but that we address the destabilising activity that Iran sponsors. I have just got back from Iraq, where we can see at first hand the support for the Shi'a militias and what that means in practice.

[Iran](#)

15 Jun 2021 | 697 cc107-9

Asked by: Greg Smith

What recent assessment he has made of Iran's compliance with the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action nuclear agreement.

Answered by: Dominic Raab | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Iran is systematically in non-compliance with the joint comprehensive plan of action—the JCPOA—and, working with our European partners and with the United States, China and Russia, we expect and require a return to full compliance.

Iran: Weapons

24 May 2021 | HL29

Asked by: Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure any new agreement with the government of Iran permanently impedes that country's ability to develop and proliferate (1) nuclear, and (2) non-nuclear weapons.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs has been clear that Iran must never be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapon, and we are committed to working with our international partners to find a solution to Iranian proliferation in the region. The Government believes that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action represents the best - and currently the only - way of constraining Iran's nuclear programme, and we are working hard to find a diplomatic way forward which brings Iran back into compliance with its commitments and restores the non-proliferation benefits of the deal.

We have always been clear that any sustainable solution will need to address a range of issues, including Iran's ballistic missile programme and destabilising activity in the region. The UK continues to enforce the EU arms embargo through domestic legislation; UN ballistic missile restrictions on Iran will also remain in place until 2023. There are also other sanctions regimes which restrict Iranian ability to proliferate weapons in the region, including those established by UN Security Council Resolutions 1540, 1701 and 2216.

Iran: Nuclear Power

26 Apr 2021 | HL14715

Asked by: Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reported decision of government of Iran to block daily access of UN inspectors to its nuclear facilities; and what representations they have made to the government of Iran.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK remains committed to preserving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA). We are concerned by Iran's continued and systematic non-compliance with its nuclear commitments under the JCPoA. The UK has repeatedly made clear in public and in private, both bilaterally and with the governments of France and Germany (as E3), that Iran must return to full compliance with its commitments. In his call with President Rouhani on 10 March, the Prime Minister stressed that while the UK remains committed to

making the JCPoA a success, Iran must stop all nuclear activity that breaches the terms of the deal and come back into compliance. The E3 has made frequent official level representations to the Iranians on this issue both in Tehran and Vienna. Iran's announcement on 16 April that they have started uranium enrichment up to 60% using advanced centrifuges is a serious and deeply worrying development. As the E3 said in a statement on 14 April, the production of highly enriched uranium constitutes an important step in the production of a nuclear weapon. Iran has no credible civilian need for enrichment at this level.

We fully support the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its safeguards mandate, which is an essential part of the global non-proliferation system. The UK, unilaterally and as E3, has urged Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA, including on all issues related to the IAEA's separate safeguards investigation. We remain concerned by Iran's decision to restrict access and oversight by the IAEA of its nuclear programme from 23 February.

Iran's continued systematic non-compliance with its JCPoA commitments is undermining the non-proliferation benefits of the deal and jeopardising our efforts to preserve it. We continue to work with the parties to the JCPoA and the US Administration to find a diplomatic way forward that realises the benefits of the deal, and call upon Iran not to take any further steps which violate its JCPoA commitments and make a return to mutual compliance harder to achieve.

Iran: Nuclear Power

26 Apr 2021 | 184564

Asked by: Jonathan Gullis

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the compatibility of Iran's ballistic missile programme with the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Answering member: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Iran's ballistic missile programme is destabilising for the region and poses a threat to European security. UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which was unanimously adopted in the Security Council and underpins the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA), calls on Iran not to undertake activities related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering a nuclear weapon. Alongside France and Germany (as E3), we have written repeatedly to the UN Secretary-General, most recently on 18 February, to bring attention to Iranian missile activity inconsistent with UNSCR 2231. We urge Iran to fully abide by UNSCR 2231 and all other relevant resolutions.

Iran: Nuclear Power

25 Mar 2021 | HL14149

Asked by: The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made on re-engaging with the government of Iran on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Iran's continued systematic non-compliance with its nuclear commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) is undermining the non-proliferation benefits of the deal and jeopardising our efforts to preserve it. On 23 February 2021, the Foreign Secretary, alongside his French and German counterparts, expressed our deep regret at Iran's suspension of the Additional Protocol and urged Iran to return to compliance with its JCPoA commitments.

On 10 March 2021 the Prime Minister in his call with President Rouhani of Iran stressed that while the UK remains committed to making the Iran nuclear deal a success, Iran must stop all nuclear activity that breaches the terms of the JCPoA and come back into compliance. The Prime Minister stressed the importance of Iran seizing the opportunity presented by the United States' willingness to return to the deal if Iran comes back into compliance. Our priority is now, with the parties of the JCPoA and the new US Administration, to find a diplomatic way forward that realises the benefits of the deal.

Iran: USA

20 Jan 2021 | HL11800

Asked by: Lord Campbell of Pittenweem

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of the United States about the effect of its sanctions against Iran on the return of the government of Iran to the obligations of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We welcome the prospect of a US return to the JCPoA. President-elect Biden has said that if Iran returns to compliance with the deal, the US would re-enter the agreement and seek to both strengthen it and extend it. This is an important opportunity to restart engagement between Iran and the US, and realise the objectives of the JCPoA which we support. A return to diplomacy represents the best means of bringing greater security to the region, upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime and preventing Iran from

developing a nuclear weapon. We look forward to engaging with the new administration on this issue.

Iran: Nuclear Power

19 Jan 2021 | 136100

Asked by: Alexander Stafford

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of Iran's compliance with the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Answering member: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We are deeply concerned by Iran's continued systematic non-compliance with its nuclear commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). On 4 January Iran commenced uranium enrichment up to 20% at the underground facility of the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant, which is in clear violation of Iran's commitments under the deal. We are also deeply concerned by the nuclear law passed by the Iranian Parliament in December, which obliges the Iranian Government to expand its nuclear programme and limit International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) monitoring access.

We have made our position clear to Iran, including at the JCPOA ministerial meeting on 21 December and in an E3 Foreign Ministers statement on 6 January, that it must return to its JCPOA commitments. Iran's non-compliance jeopardises our efforts to preserve the JCPOA and puts at risk the opportunity for diplomacy with the incoming US Administration. We remain in close contact with the other remaining JCPOA participants to assess how to best address Iran's non-compliance within the framework of the JCPOA. The JCPOA remains the best, and currently only, way to monitor and constrain Iran's nuclear programme and ensure Iran never gets a nuclear weapon.

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Debates

Government Policy on Iran

09 Dec 2020 | House of Commons | 685 cc423-446WH

Motion, That this House has considered Government policy on Iran. Agreed to on question.

Iran: Stability in the Middle East

30 Jan 2020 | House of Lords | 801 cc1554-1568

Lords question for short debate on what assessment they have made of the influence of Iran.

Iranian Nuclear Programme

02 Jul 2015 | House of Commons | Westminster Hall | 597 cc554-574WH

Motion that this House has considered the Iranian nuclear programme. Agreed to on question. Sitting adjourned without question put.

Iran (Proposed Nuclear Agreement)

16 Jun 2015 | House of Commons | Westminster Hall | 597 cc1-24WH

Motion that this House has considered Iran and the proposed nuclear agreement. Agreed to on question.

6

Statements

Joint Comprehensive Plan Of Action

14 Jan 2020 | 669 cc1482-8

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and First Secretary of State (Dominic Raab): With permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement on the Iran nuclear agreement known as the joint comprehensive plan of action.

I addressed the House yesterday on wider concerns in relation to Iran's conduct in the region. The strategic aim for the UK and our international partners remains as it has always been: to de-escalate tensions; to hold Iran to account for its nefarious activities; and to keep the diplomatic door open for the regime to negotiate a peaceful way forward. Iran's destabilising activity should serve as a reminder to us all of the danger to the region and to the world if it were ever to acquire a nuclear weapon. We cannot let that happen.

With that in mind, today, the E3, consisting of the United Kingdom, France and Germany, has jointly taken action to hold Iran to account for its systematic non-compliance with the JCPOA. As the European parties to the deal, we have written to the EU High Representative, Josep Borrell, in his capacity as co-ordinator of the JCPOA. We have formally triggered the dispute resolution mechanism, thereby referring Iran to the Joint Commission.

Let me set out the pattern of non-compliance by the regime that left us with no credible alternative. Since last May, Iran has step by step reduced its compliance with critical elements of the JCPOA, leaving it a shell of an agreement. On 1 July 2019, the International Atomic Energy Agency reported that Iran had exceeded key limits on low enriched uranium stockpile limits. On 8 July, the IAEA reported that Iran had exceeded its 3.67% enriched uranium production limit. On 5 November, the IAEA confirmed that Iran had crossed its advanced centrifuge research and development limits. On 7 November, the IAEA confirmed that Iran had restarted enrichment activities at the Fordow facility—a clear violation of JCPOA restrictions. On 18 November, the IAEA reported that Iran had exceeded its heavy water limits. On 5 January this year, Iran announced that it would no longer adhere to JCPOA limits on centrifuge numbers.

Each of those actions was serious. Together, they now raise acute concerns about Iran's nuclear ambitions. Iran's breakout time—the time that it would need to produce enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon—is now falling, which is an international concern. Time and time again, we have expressed our serious concerns to Iran, and urged it to come back into compliance. Time and time again, in its statements and more importantly through its actions, it

has refused, undermining the very integrity of the deal and flouting its international commitments.

Iran's announcement on 5 January made it clear that it was now effectively refusing to comply with any of the outstanding substantive restrictions that the JCPOA placed on its nuclear programme. On that date, the Iranian Government stated that its

“nuclear program no longer faces any operational restrictions, including enrichment capacity, percentage of enrichment, amount of enriched material, and research and development.”

With regret, the E3 was left with no choice but to refer Iran to the JCPOA's dispute resolution mechanism. The DRM is the procedure set out in the deal to resolve disputes between the parties to the agreement. Alongside our partners, we will use this to press Iran to come back into full compliance with its commitments and honour an agreement that is in all our interests.

The European External Action Service will now co-ordinate and convene the DRM process. As a first step, it will call a meeting of the Joint Commission, bringing together all parties to the JCPOA within 15 days. This process has been designed explicitly to allow participants flexibility and full control at each and every stage. Let me make it clear to the House that we are triggering the DRM because Iran has undermined the objective and purpose of the JCPOA, but we do so with a view to bringing Iran back into full compliance. We are triggering the DRM to reinforce the diplomatic track, not to abandon it. For our part, as the United Kingdom we were disappointed that the US withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018, and we have worked tirelessly with our international partners to preserve the agreement. We have upheld our commitments, lifting economic and financial sanctions on sectors such as banking, oil, shipping and metals. We lifted an asset freeze and travel bans on listed entities and individuals. We have sought to support a legitimate trade relationship with Iran. The UK, France and Germany will remain committed to the deal, and we will approach the DRM in good faith, striving to resolve the dispute and bring Iran back into full compliance with its JCPOA obligations.

As I made clear to the House yesterday, the Government in Iran have a choice. The regime can take steps to de-escalate tensions and adhere to the basic rules of international law or sink deeper and deeper into political and economic isolation. So too, Iran's response to the DRM will be a crucial test of its intentions and good will. We urge Iran to work with us to save the deal. We urge Iran to see this as an opportunity to reassure the world that its nuclear intentions are exclusively peaceful. We urge the Iranian Government to choose an alternative path and engage in diplomacy and negotiation to resolve the full range of its activities that flout international law and destabilise the region. I commend the statement to the House.

Iran Nuclear Deal

08 May 2019 | 797 cc1226-1230

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon): My Lords, I wish to repeat as a Statement an Answer given to an Urgent Question in the other place by my right honourable friend the Minister for Asia. The Statement is as follows:

“The UK notes with great concern the statement made by Iran today concerning its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We are analysing the detail of it and are in close contact with other parties to the deal, but I have to say to the House that today’s announcement from Tehran is an unwelcome step. I urge Iran not to take further escalatory steps and to stand by its commitments. We are not at this stage talking of reimposing sanctions but one has to remember that they were lifted in exchange for nuclear restrictions as part of the JCPOA. Should Iran cease meeting its nuclear commitments, there would of course be consequences.

For as long as Iran keeps its commitments, so will the United Kingdom. It is critical that we maintain an open dialogue with Iran. The Foreign Office political director visits Tehran this week to discuss this and a range of bilateral issues. I hope to visit Iran in the coming months.

In this regard, we recall our own firm commitments under the deal, including sanctions lifting for the benefit of the Iranian people. The lifting of nuclear-related sanctions is an essential part of the JCPOA. It aims at having a positive impact not only on trade and economic relations with that country but, most importantly, on the lives of many of the Iranian people, who have had such a tough time in recent decades. We deeply regret the reimposition of sanctions by the United States following its withdrawal from the JCPOA.

The UK, along with the remaining participants to the JCPOA—France, Germany, Russia and China—are committed to working on sanctions relief for Iran, together with third countries interested in supporting the JCPOA. We are determined to pursue efforts, together with other European partners, to enable the continuation of legitimate trade with Iran. The UK and our European partners met Iranian officials only yesterday in Brussels to discuss the next steps needed to operationalise the special purpose vehicle, INSTEX, which is aimed to facilitate legitimate trade with Iran.

Even at this stage, we encourage all countries, including Russia and China as JCPOA participants, to make their best efforts to pursue the sanctions relief that the agreement allows for through concrete steps. We take this opportunity to call on countries not party to the JCPOA to refrain from taking any actions that impede the remaining parties’ ability fully to perform their commitments.

Finally, it is important to remember that the UK remains clear-eyed about Iran's destabilising activity in other parts of the Middle East, including its ballistic missile programme, which must now be addressed. However, we see this being best done with the JCPOA remaining in place”.

[Statement on uploading the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action](#)

05 Nov 2018 | HCWS1061

Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Alistair Burt): The UK is committed to preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. We believe the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) remains the best way of achieving that goal. It is a critical agreement that makes the world a safer place. The United Kingdom, and our European partners, continue to work with the remaining parties to the deal to maintain it. We expect Iran to meet its nuclear commitments as set out in the agreement in full.

In May of this year, President Trump announced the withdrawal of the United States of America from the JCPOA. In consequence, today US sanctions on Iran will be re-imposed, including on Iran's oil and gas exporting capability. We have been clear with the US administration about our determination to preserve the JCPOA, and the fact that this is driven by our national security interests.

As a party to the JCPOA, we remain committed to ensuring that Iran receives the sanctions relief to which it is entitled. This includes taking steps to enable firms wishing to engage in legitimate trade with Iran to do so. We are working with our partners France and Germany, fellow parties to the JCPOA, to develop a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to enable continued sanctions relief to reach Iran, and allow for European exporters and importers to trade in compliance with EU and UN sanctions.

In parallel to our work with partners to maintain the JCPOA, we continue to take steps with our partners against the IRGC's destabilising behaviour across the region and to hold Iran to account on human rights, including its treatment of British-Iranians detained in Iran.

[Iran Nuclear Deal](#)

09 May 2018 | 640 cc679-694

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson): With permission, Mr Speaker, I shall make a statement on the future of the Iran nuclear agreement, officially known as the joint comprehensive plan of action.

The Government regret the decision of the United States Administration to withdraw from the deal and reimpose American sanctions on Iran. We did our utmost to prevent this outcome: from the moment that President Trump's Administration took office, we made the case for keeping the JCPOA at every level. Last Sunday, I travelled to Washington and repeated this country's support for the nuclear agreement in meetings with Secretary of State Pompeo, Vice-President Pence, national security adviser Bolton and others, and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister spoke to President Trump last Saturday.

The US decision makes no difference to the British assessment that the constraints imposed on Iran's nuclear ambitions by the JCPOA remain vital for our national security and the stability of the middle east. Under the agreement, Iran has relinquished 95% of its low-enriched uranium, placed two thirds of its centrifuges in storage, removed the core of its heavy water reactor—thus closing off the plutonium route to a bomb—and allowed the International Atomic Energy Agency to mount the most intrusive and rigorous inspection regime ever devised, an obligation on Iran that lasts until 2040. The House should not underestimate the impact of those measures. The interval needed for Iran to make enough weapons-grade uranium for one nuclear bomb is known as the breakout time. Under the deal, Iran's breakout time has trebled, or even quadrupled, from a few months to at least a year, and the plutonium pathway to a weapon has been blocked completely.

For as long as Iran abides by the agreement—and the IAEA has publicly reported its compliance nine times so far—Britain will remain a party to the JCPOA. I remind the House that the JCPOA is an international agreement, painstakingly negotiated over 13 years under both Republican and Democratic Administrations, and enshrined in United Nations resolution 2231. Britain has no intention of walking away; instead, we will co-operate with the other parties to ensure that while Iran continues to restrict its nuclear programme, its people will benefit from sanctions relief in accordance with the central bargain of the deal. I cannot yet go into detail about the steps that we propose to take, but I hope to make that information available as soon as possible, and I spoke yesterday to my French and German counterparts.

In his statement on 12 January, President Trump highlighted important limitations of the JCPOA, including the fact that some constraints on Iran's nuclear capacity will expire in 2025. Britain worked alongside France and Germany to find a way forward that would have addressed the President's concerns and allowed the US to stay in the JCPOA, but without reopening the terms of the agreement. I still believe that that would have been the better course. Now that our efforts on this side of the Atlantic have not succeeded, it falls to the US Administration to spell out their view of the way ahead. In the meantime, I urge the US to avoid taking any action that would hinder other parties from continuing to make the agreement work in the interests of our

collective national security. I urge Iran to respond to the US decision with restraint and to continue to observe its commitments under the JCPOA.

We have always been at one with the United States in our profound concern about Iran's missile tests and Iran's disruptive role in the middle east, particularly in Yemen and Syria. The UK has acted to counter Iran's destabilising behaviour in the region, and we will continue to do so. We remain adamant that a nuclear-armed Iran would never be acceptable to the United Kingdom. Indeed, Iran's obligation not to "seek, develop or acquire" nuclear weapons appears—without any time limit—on the first page of the preamble to the JCPOA.

Yesterday, President Trump promised to work

“with our allies to find a real, comprehensive, and lasting solution to the Iranian nuclear threat.”

I have no difficulty whatever with that goal; the question is, how does the US propose to achieve it? Now that the Trump Administration have left the JCPOA, the responsibility falls on them to describe how they, in Washington, will build a new negotiated solution to our shared concerns—a settlement that must necessarily include Iran, China and Russia, as well as countries in the region. Britain stands ready to support that task, but in the meantime, we will strive to preserve the gains made by the JCPOA. I commend the statement to the House.

[The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action \(Iran nuclear deal\)](#)

16 Oct 2017 | HCWS171

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson): Her Majesty's Government has taken note of President Trump's decision not to recertify the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to Congress and, along with France, Germany and our other international partners, is concerned by the implications.

Her Majesty's Government is strongly committed to the Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPoA. This deal represents the culmination of 13 years of diplomacy and was a major step towards ensuring that Iran's nuclear programme is only for peaceful purposes. The JCPoA contributes to the United Kingdom's wider non-proliferation objectives and strengthens the international framework in this regard.

The Government remains of the firm view that the deal is in the security interests of the United Kingdom and the wider region and is, most importantly, working to constrain Iran's nuclear ambitions. The International

Atomic Energy Agency has released eight reports on Iran's nuclear programme since Implementation Day of the JCPoA in January 2016. In our role as a member of the Joint Commission, the body set up to implement the deal, consisting of the E3+3 (UK, France, Germany, China, Russia, US) and Iran, and coordinated by the European Union, we have held Iran to account and urged continued compliance. Where Iran has previously pushed the boundaries of the deal, it has taken steps to remain in compliance. The most recent report of the International Atomic Energy Agency in August 2017 confirmed that Iran continues to comply with its nuclear related commitments under the JCPoA.

However, the Government shares serious concerns about Iran's ballistic missile programme and its destabilising activity in the region. Addressing these issues is a fundamental part of the Government's policy towards Iran and we will consider further appropriate measures. The nuclear deal does not prevent us from tackling these issues. On the contrary, removing the most dangerous threat of nuclear weapons allows us to focus our efforts on challenging on the other areas of Iran's destabilising activity.

In parallel to agreeing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in July 2015, Her Majesty's Government has been rebuilding bilateral relations with Iran in order to address issues of disagreement as well as discuss areas of agreement and cooperation. Both the United Kingdom and Iran reopened Embassies in London and Tehran in August 2015 and we upgraded to Ambassadorial relations in September 2016. We remain very concerned about dual British-Iranian nationals who are detained in Iran and on whose cases we continue to press for improvement at the highest levels. Both the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary have raised these cases personally with their Iranian counterparts and will continue to do so.

Her Majesty's Government will continue to make the case for the JCPoA with its partners, including the United States, and is committed to ensuring its success in delivering both our security objectives and delivering sanctions relief for the Iranian people, while we also work to tackle our broader concerns. The Government is encouraging the US Administration and Congress to consider the implications to the security of the US and its allies before taking any further steps that might undermine or weaken the JCPoA.

Iran: Nuclear Deal

15 Jul 2015 | 598 cc893-914

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Philip Hammond): With permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement on the outcome of the nuclear negotiations with Iran.

In recent days the world has held its breath as the talks between world powers and Iran edged towards a conclusion. They were difficult negotiations and all sides faced tough decisions. In the early hours of yesterday morning, a process that began over a decade ago came to a conclusion. The result is an historic deal, a landmark moment in efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation, and a victory for diplomacy. The UK, with its partners in the E3+3—China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States, with the EU High Representative as our co-ordinator—have at last reached a comprehensive agreement with Iran on its nuclear programme. With the conclusion of these negotiations, the world can be reassured that all Iranian routes to a nuclear bomb have been closed off, and the world can have confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian civil nuclear programme going forward.

The origin of these negotiations lies in the revelation some 12 years ago that Iran was concealing nuclear activities, in violation of its international obligations. At that time, Iran—under a different Government—was not willing to meet the requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the international community responded with multiple UN Security Council resolutions. The agreement that we have reached does not absolve Iran of blame for its previous activities, and neither does it wipe the slate clean. Instead, it offers Iran the opportunity to draw a line under its past behaviour, and gradually to build the world's trust in its declarations that it is not pursuing the development of a nuclear weapon. That will not be a quick process, but with the implementation of this deal, it should be possible.

The Government's purpose in seeking an agreement has always been clear: to secure assurance that Iran will not be able to develop a nuclear weapon. To that end, this agreement imposes strict limits on Iran's nuclear programme that are comprehensive and long lasting. For 10 years, Iran's enrichment capacity will be reduced by more than two thirds from current levels. It will enrich uranium only to a level of 3.67%—well below the 90% level of enrichment considered necessary for a nuclear weapon—and its stockpile of low-enriched uranium will be limited to 300 kg, down from more than seven tonnes at present, with the balance exported to Russia. Its research and development activities will be constrained so that it will not be able to enrich with advanced centrifuges for at least 10 years. Additionally, no uranium enrichment, enrichment research and development, or nuclear material will be permitted at Iran's underground Fordow nuclear site. The agreement also cuts off the plutonium route to developing a nuclear bomb. Iran's heavy water research reactor at Arak will be redesigned and rebuilt so that it will no longer have the capability to produce weapons-grade plutonium.

Given the historical levels of mistrust that have built up between Iran and the international community, a strong inspections regime and a framework for addressing concerns about past military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme are vital for building trust and providing us with the confidence

that Iran is meeting its commitments. Some of the crucial monitoring and transparency measures of this deal will last indefinitely, such as the implementation of the additional protocol to the comprehensive safeguards agreement. The AP for every country allows access to sites about which the IAEA has concerns that cannot be addressed in any other way. Iran is no exception. Iran's non-proliferation treaty obligation—including the obligation never to acquire or develop nuclear weapons—will apply during and after the period of the deal. We will not hesitate to take action, including the re-imposition of sanctions, if Iran violates its NPT obligations at any time, and our concerns about the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programme will be addressed. The IAEA and Iran have agreed a “road map” of actions to clarify those issues.

Taken together, those measures mean that if Iran were to renege on its promises and try to “break out” for a bomb, it would take at least 12 months even to acquire the necessary fissile material for a single device. The robust transparency measures that we have agreed mean that we—the international community—would know almost immediately, and we would have time to respond.

In return for implementing those commitments, and as our confidence in Iran's programme develops over time, Iran will receive phased and proportionate sanctions relief. Initially, there will be relief of EU, US and UN nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions, but let me be clear: that sanctions relief will be triggered only once the IAEA verifies that Iran has taken the agreed steps to limit its nuclear programme.

Other core provisions in the existing UN Security Council resolutions will be re-established by a new UN resolution. Important restrictions on the import and export of conventional arms and development of ballistic missiles will be re-imposed through an annex to that resolution, and only lifted later in the agreement. Those relaxations are backed by a robust enforcement mechanism: if there is a significant violation of the nuclear provisions of the agreement, all previous UN sanctions can be re-imposed through a snap-back mechanism, which any party to this agreement can invoke. The EU and the US could also re-impose their own sanctions in such a scenario. Clearly, having made this agreement, it will be strongly in Iran's interest to comply with the provisions of it to avoid a return to the sanctions regime that has crippled its economy for so long.

We now need to look ahead to the implementation of the agreement. After such a tough negotiation there will inevitably be bumps along the road. We entered into the agreement in good faith, and all sides must try to resolve together any problems in implementing the deal, but the deal includes robust enforcement provisions and we will not hesitate to use them if Iran goes back on its word.

This agreement is focused solely on Iran's nuclear programme, but its conclusion could have wider positive consequences. By providing the means through sanctions relief for Iran's economic re-engagement with the world, it will allow the Iranian people to feel the tangible benefits of international co-operation. As that economic re-engagement materialises, we will, of course, seek to assist UK businesses to take advantage of the opportunities that will arise. That assistance would, of course, be enhanced through having a functioning British embassy in Tehran. We remain committed to reopening our embassies in each others' countries and will do so once we have resolved some outstanding issues.

The deal also has the potential to build a different kind of relationship between Iran and the west, and to change in a positive way the dynamics in the region and beyond. In an atmosphere of developing confidence and trust, there will be an opportunity for Iran to re-align its approach in support of the international community's efforts, in particular in confronting the shared challenge of ISIL and the resolution of regional crises, such as those in Yemen and Syria, but this will be a process. It will take time. In the meantime, we remain realistic about the nature of the Iranian regime and its wider ambitions. We will continue to speak out against Iran's poor human rights record and we will continue to work closely with our friends, allies and partners in the region who live with Iranian interference in their neighbourhood. Iran will not get a free pass to meddle beyond its borders.

An Iranian bomb would be a major threat to global stability. That threat is now removed. We and Iran now have a common responsibility to ensure that the wider potential benefits of this deal for the region and for the international community as a whole are delivered. The UK is fully committed to playing its part, and I commend the statement to the House.

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Early Day Motions

Iran nuclear deal

EDM 202 (session 2019-21)

24 February 2020

Alistair Carmichael

That this House recognises that the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was a landmark agreement providing a comprehensive, negotiated solution for limiting the Iranian nuclear programme, contributing to peace and stability in the surrounding region, and showcasing cooperation between Iran and the P5+1; is deeply concerned by the decision of 8 May 2018 by the President of the United States of America to withdraw the US from the JCPOA; calls on the Government to use its influence in Washington to urge the US to reconsider its approach to the JCPOA and to uphold its obligation to the deal; and further calls on the Government to maintain its commitment to the deal as outlined in the E3 Statement of 12 January 2020.

Iran nuclear deal

EDM 1251 (session 2017-19)

9 May 2018

Caroline Lucas

That this House is deeply concerned by the decision of 8 May 2018 by the President of the United States of America to withdraw the US from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and re-impose economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran; is disappointed that this decision was made despite the International Atomic Energy Agency's confirmation that Iran is in full compliance with the JCPOA; believes that President Trump's decision will undermine progress towards the normalisation of relations between Iran and Western governments and will threaten peace, security, and stability in the Middle East; notes that the erosion of the JCPOA will serve to undermine international attempts to curb nuclear proliferation and could seriously hamper the opportunity to deliver a denuclearised Korean Peninsula; expresses regret about the damage this decision will do to the credibility of and trust in multilateral agreements; commends those countries, including the UK, that have reaffirmed their commitment to the JCPOA; and calls on the Government to use its influence in Washington to urge the US to reconsider its approach to the JCPOA and to uphold its commitments to the deal, Iran, and the wider region.

Joint Parliamentarians' initiative on the Iran nuclear deal

EDM 1143 (session 2017-19)

28 May 2018

Hilary Benn

That this House notes with concern the possibility that the US Administration could move towards abandoning the Iran Nuclear Deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA); believes that this would undermine what has been achieved in controlling Iran's nuclear programme and damage both the UK's credibility as an international partner in negotiation and the pursuit of diplomacy as a means of promoting peace and ensuring security; asserts that weakening the deal would make it more difficult to keep Iran nuclear-free after the expiry of the special provisions of the JCPOA; and therefore expresses support for the joint initiative from French and German Members of Parliament to urge members of the US Congress to stand by the Iran Nuclear Deal.

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